

Nintendo: A Comprehensive Overview

Founded in 1889 in Kyoto as a playing-card company by Fusajiro Yamauchi, Nintendo Co., Ltd. has grown into one of the world's most influential video game companies nintendo.co.jp. Over its long history the company "has sold more than 5.5 billion video games and over 800 million hardware units globally" nintendo.com. It is famous for household-name franchises (e.g. *Mario*, *Donkey Kong*, *The Legend of Zelda*, *Metroid*, *Pokémon*, *Animal Crossing*, *Pikmin*, *Splatoon*, etc.) that span games, merchandise, film, and theme parks nintendo.com. Nintendo's business model of integrated hardware/software and emphasis on innovation (rather than raw processing power) has set many industry standards.

History and Milestones

Founding and early years (1889–1970s). Nintendo began as a maker of *Hanafuda* Japanese playing cards in 1889 nintendo.co.jp. In the first half of the 20th century it expanded its card business and toys, changing its name to Nintendo Co., Ltd. in 1963 nintendo.co.jp. By the 1970s Nintendo was experimenting with electronic games: its first home video game systems (the *Color TV-Game* series) appeared in 1977 nintendo.co.jp, and it launched the *Game & Watch* handheld LCD games in 1980 nintendo.co.jp. In 1981 Shigeru Miyamoto (a young Nintendo artist) created *Donkey Kong*, an arcade hit that introduced the character later named Mario nintendo.com. These steps set the stage for Nintendo's entry into the global home-console market.

Console revolution (1980s–1990s). Nintendo's 8-bit *Family Computer* (Famicom) debuted in Japan in 1983 nintendo.co.jp and in the U.S. as the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) in 1985. The NES "restarted the video game industry" after the 1983 crash en.wikipedia.org, thanks to popular titles like *Super Mario Bros.* and *Zelda*. In 1989 Nintendo launched the *Game Boy* handheld nintendo.co.jp (running games like *Tetris* and later *Pokémon*), beginning its domination of portable gaming. The early 1990s saw the 16-bit *Super Famicom/Super NES* (1990) nintendo.co.jp, which featured advanced graphics (e.g. Mode 7 scaling) and blockbusters like *Donkey Kong Country*. In 1996 Nintendo introduced the 3D-capable *Nintendo 64* nintendo.co.jp, bringing analog controls and 3D Mario (*Super Mario 64*) to gamers.

Expansion and innovation (2000s). In 2001 Nintendo released two new systems: the handheld *Game Boy Advance* and the home *GameCube* nintendo.co.jp. In 2004 it stunned the market with the dual-screen *Nintendo DS* nintendo.co.jp (the world's best-selling handheld and second-best-selling console allabout-japan.com), featuring a touch screen and games for both casual and core audiences. The company's most revolutionary console came in 2006: the *Wii* nintendo.co.jp. With its wireless motion-sensitive "Wii Remote," the Wii appealed to non-traditional gamers and families. *Wii Sports* (bundled with many consoles) became the second-best-selling game ever, and the Wii itself moved over 101 million units nintendo.co.jp, making it Nintendo's most successful home console.

Recent era and the Switch (2011–present). In 2011 Nintendo launched the *3DS* handheld with glasses-free 3D visuals nintendo.co.jp. However, the next home console, the *Wii U* (2012), struggled commercially nintendo.co.jp. Nintendo rebounded in 2017 with the hybrid *Nintendo Switch* nintendo.co.jp, which can be played as a home console or portable device. The Switch's modular Joy-Con controllers and family-friendly games (e.g. *Mario Kart 8 Deluxe*, *Animal Crossing: New Horizons*) proved a global hit, leading to over 150 million units shipped by the end of 2024 nintendo.co.jp. Nintendo has since expanded its business beyond hardware: it launched a subscription-based online service (Nintendo Switch Online) in 2018 nintendo.co.jp, opened its first flagship store (Nintendo TOKYO) in 2019, and even entered theme parks. In 2021 Nintendo opened the first **Super Nintendo World** in Universal Studios Japan nintendo.co.jp (featuring Mario-themed rides); a Hollywood park followed in 2023 en.wikipedia.org. Nintendo also branched into entertainment – in 2023 it co-produced *The Super Mario Bros. Movie*

nintendo.co.jp.

Key Franchises and Game Series

- **Mario** – Nintendo's flagship character (created by Miyamoto in 1981) stars in the *Super Mario* platform series, *Mario Kart* racing, *Mario Party*, sports games, and more. The *Mario* franchise is the best-selling game franchise ever, with around 909 million copies sold worldwide en.wikipedia.org. Mario games are credited with defining platform gaming (e.g. *Super Mario Bros.*) and remain cultural icons.
- **The Legend of Zelda** – An action-adventure series debuted in 1986. *Zelda* games, led by Shigeru Miyamoto and Takashi Tezuka, are known for immersive worlds and puzzles. This series has sold over 170 million copies en.wikipedia.org and titles like *Ocarina of Time* and *Breath of the Wild* are critically acclaimed.
- **Pokémon** – Developed in partnership with Game Freak, *Pokémon* launched in 1996 on the Game Boy and became a worldwide phenomenon. It spans video games, an anime

series, trading cards, and merchandise. The Pokémon game franchise has sold roughly 480 million copies [en.wikipedia.org](#) , and by 2024 the franchise’s total revenue (games plus all media) has surpassed \$100 billion. Pokémon titles regularly top Nintendo’s sales charts.

- **Animal Crossing** – A life-simulation series started in 2001, where players live in a town of anthropomorphic animals. It has grown into a major hit for Nintendo, especially with *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* (2020) during the pandemic. The series has sold over 81 million copies [en.wikipedia.org](#) and is notable for its broad appeal (social play, real-time clock) and frequent events.
- **Other notable series** – Nintendo also owns *Metroid* (sci-fi adventure), *Kirby* (action platform), *Fire Emblem* (strategy RPG), *Splatoon* (team shooter), *Pokémon* spinoffs, and more. For example, *Mario Kart* (racing) has sold ~189 million and *Mario Party* ~82 million [en.wikipedia.org](#) , while *Splatoon* has exceeded 25 million copies. Although smaller in scale, these franchises reinforce Nintendo’s identity of creative, family-friendly gaming.

Major Consoles and Handhelds

Nintendo’s home consoles (like the NES shown above) and handhelds have each defined gaming eras. The *NES/Famicom* (1983/1985) revived console gaming globally [nintendo.co.jp](#) [en.wikipedia.org](#) . Over the years Nintendo released a succession of systems – Super NES (1990) [nintendo.co.jp](#) , Nintendo 64 (1996) [nintendo.co.jp](#) , GameCube (2001) [nintendo.co.jp](#) , Wii (2006) [nintendo.co.jp](#) , Wii U (2012) [nintendo.co.jp](#) , and Switch (2017) [nintendo.co.jp](#) – each with innovations (e.g. 3D graphics on N64, motion control on Wii). On the handheld side, Game Boy (1989), Game Boy Advance (2001), Nintendo DS (2004), and 3DS (2011) introduced features like portable libraries of classic games and stereoscopic 3D. The table below summarizes major Nintendo consoles, their launch dates, total sales, and key features.

Console	Launch Year	Units Sold (millions)	Key Features / Impact
NES (Family Computer)	1983 (JP),	61.91 nintendo.co.jp	Revived video game industry en.wikipedia.org ; home of Mario, Zelda.
	1985 (US)		
Super NES (SNES)	1990 (JP),	49.10 nintendo.co.jp	16-bit graphics (Mode 7); classic titles (Donkey Kong Country, Chrono Trigger).
	1991 (US)		
Nintendo 64	1996	32.93 nintendo.co.jp	First 64-bit console; analog stick, pioneered 3D Mario and multiplayer (GoldenEye).
Console	Launch Year	Units Sold (millions)	Key Features / Impact
GameCube	2001	21.74	Mini-DVD format; emphasis on local multiplayer

Wii	2006	101.63 nintendo.co.jp	Motion-sensitive "Remote" controller allabout-japan.com ; broadened audience (Wii Sports).
Wii U	2012	13.56 nintendo.co.jp	Dual-screen (GamePad); struggled commercially, but its ideas led to Switch.
Nintendo Switch	2017	150.86 nintendo.co.jp	Hybrid home/portable; detachable Joy-Cons; record sales and blockbuster titles.
Game Boy / Game Boy Color	1989	118.69 nintendo.co.jp	First major handheld; global hits like <i>Tetris</i> and <i>Pokémon</i> . (Color add-on for color graphics.)
Game Boy Advance	2001	81.51 nintendo.co.jp	32-bit portable; backward-compatible; strong RPG library (Pokémon Ruby/Sapphire, Metroid).
Nintendo DS	2004	154.02 nintendo.co.jp	Dual screens (one touchscreen); best-selling handheld and second-best-selling console allabout-japan.com ; appealed to all ages (Brain Age, Nintendogs).
Nintendo 3DS	2011	75.94 nintendo.co.jp	Glasses-free 3D; enhanced graphics; revitalized handheld market with StreetPass and eShop games.

Impact on Industry and Culture

Nintendo's innovations have repeatedly shifted the gaming landscape. The NES is famously credited with "restarting the video game industry" after the 1983 crash en.wikipedia.org. Nintendo handhelds (Game Boy, DS, 3DS) made gaming ubiquitous on the go, spawning phenomena like *Pokémon* and *Brain Age* allabout-japan.com. The Wii brought video games into the family room, as "the console [that] became a household fixture" and even helped families get active together thenationalnews.com. Shigeru Miyamoto's creations alone have sold over a billion copies theguardian.com, reflecting Nintendo's deep cultural imprint. Nintendo characters and games extend far beyond consoles: they appear in cartoons, movies (the 2023 *Super Mario* film grossed over \$1.3 billion worldwide nintendo.co.jp), theme parks nintendo.co.jp, and merchandising. In the words of *The Guardian*, Miyamoto is "the most influential game designer in the world" and Nintendo has become gaming's "Pixar" through its creative, character-driven approach theguardian.com. In short, Nintendo has played a key role in making video games

mainstream entertainment across generations.

Business Model and Financials

Nintendo operates as a vertically-integrated games publisher: it designs and manufactures its hardware and develops/publishes most first-party software. Revenue comes from console sales (often at low margin) and especially from game sales (both physical and digital). Nintendo's official financial reports show it remains highly profitable. For fiscal 2023–24 Nintendo reported ¥1,671.892 billion in revenue (~US\$12.84 billion) and ¥528.941 billion in operating income nintendoworldreport.com . In recent years digital sales have become crucial: in FY2024 over half of Nintendo's software units were sold digitally nintendoworldreport.com . Nintendo also earns licensing and "other" revenue – for example, its share of the 2023 Mario movie – which totaled ¥92.7 billion (US\$711 million) that year nintendoworldreport.com . Additionally, the company generates recurring revenue from its Nintendo Switch Online subscriptions.

The Switch is currently Nintendo's main business driver: as of late 2024 it had shipped 150.86 million units nintendo.co.jp , making it one of the best-selling consoles ever. Blockbuster Switch software titles continue to sell millions of copies, sustaining earnings. Nintendo's conservative fiscal policy has kept debt low and profit margins healthy (operating margins in FY2024 were ~31%). (Nintendo's Tokyo Stock Exchange listing in 2022 reflects its status as a major media company.) In sum, Nintendo's financial model combines hardware launches (spurring short-term revenue) with a steady stream of high-margin software sales and online services. This model – based on strong franchises and disciplined management – has made Nintendo one of the most financially solid companies in games nintendoworldreport.com .

Notable Figures in Nintendo's History

Key individuals have guided Nintendo's direction. **Fusajiro Yamauchi** founded the company in 1889 nintendo.co.jp . His grandson **Hiroshi Yamauchi** dramatically transformed Nintendo after World War II: he led from 1949 until 2002, taking the company public and pivoting it into electronic games. After 52 years at the helm, Yamauchi retired in 2002 and named **Satoru Iwata** (formerly a programmer and HAL Laboratory executive) as his successor nintendo.com . Iwata served as president until 2015 and oversaw the DS and Wii era.

Nintendo's creative legacy is closely tied to **Shigeru Miyamoto**, who joined Nintendo in 1977. Miyamoto created *Donkey Kong*, *Mario*, *Zelda*, and *Star Fox*, and has been involved in all of Nintendo's consoles theguardian.com . He is often called gaming's Spielberg (or "Pixar") due to his influence on game design. In marketing and operations, figures like **Reggie Fils-Aimé** (President of Nintendo of America, 2006–2019) raised Nintendo's profile globally, and **Genyo**

Takeda (former EVP) helped design hardware. In recent years **Tatsumi Kimishima** (president 2015–2018) and current president **Shuntaro Furukawa** (since 2018) have guided Nintendo into its modern phase of digital services and global expansion.

Current and Future Outlook

Nintendo's current focus is on preparing its next hardware platform while continuing to leverage its IP. In January 2025 Nintendo officially announced "**Nintendo Switch 2**", a successor console due later in 2025 nintendo.com. The Switch 2 will play both new Switch 2 games and most existing Switch titles nintendo.com, easing the transition for consumers. Nintendo is promoting this launch through upcoming Nintendo Direct presentations and worldwide "Switch 2 Experience" demo events.

Meanwhile, Nintendo continues to monetize its franchises. It has released new game updates and remasters on Switch and mobile (e.g. *Mario Kart* and *Pokémon* titles), and expanded its reach through media. The recent *Super Mario* movie (2023) was a massive hit nintendo.co.jp.

Nintendo's theme-park strategy is also growing: in addition to parks in Japan and Hollywood, new Super Nintendo World lands are under construction at Universal's Orlando (Epic Universe) and Singapore parks, scheduled to open in 2025 en.wikipedia.org.

Financially, Nintendo remains strong. Its 2024 earnings beat earlier forecasts nintendoworldreport.com, and analysts note that as Switch sales slow, Nintendo's digital game sales and IP licensing (movies, merchandise) provide stable revenue. Looking ahead, the industry expects the Switch 2 to be a major initiative – including possible new features like virtual reality support, as hinted by recent patents – but Nintendo has not confirmed specifics. In sum, Nintendo's strategy is to build on its proven formula: launch new hardware at intervals, back it with first-party blockbusters, and broaden its audience through cross-media ventures.

Table: Major Nintendo Consoles (Home and Handheld)

Console	Launch (Year)	Global Sales	Key Features / Significance
NES / Famicom	1983 (JP), 1985 (US)	61.91 million nintendo.co.jp	Revived console gaming after 1983 crash en.wikipedia.org ; home of Mario & Zelda.
Super NES (SNES)	1990 (JP), 1991 (US)	49.10 million nintendo.co.jp	16-bit graphics; Mode 7 scaling; classics like <i>Chrono Trigger</i> .
Nintendo 64	1996	32.93 million nintendo.co.jp	First 64-bit system; analog stick and 3D action (e.g. <i>Super Mario 64</i>).
GameCube	2001	21.74 million nintendo.co.jp	Mini-DVD discs; focus on local multiplayer (<i>Mario Kart: DD</i>).
Wii	2006	101.63 million nintendo.co.jp	Motion-sensing Wii Remote allabout-japan.com ; mass-market “casual” games.
Wii U	2012	13.56 million nintendo.co.jp	GamePad controller with touchscreen; laid groundwork for Switch.
Switch	2017	150.86 million nintendo.co.jp	Hybrid home/portable; detachable Joy-Cons; record-breaking sales.
Game Boy / GBC	1989	118.69 million nintendo.co.jp	First major handheld; worldwide hit <i>Tetris</i> ; <i>Pokémon</i> begins here.
Game Boy Advance	2001	81.51 million nintendo.co.jp	32-bit portable; backward-compatible; strong RPG library.
Nintendo DS	2004	154.02 million nintendo.co.jp	Dual screens with touchscreen; best-selling handheld allabout-japan.com ; diverse games (<i>Brain Age</i> , <i>Nintendogs</i>).
Console	Launch (Year)	Global Sales	Key Features / Significance
Nintendo 3DS	2011	75.94 million nintendo.co.jp	Glasses-free 3D display; added StreetPass features; revived portable market.

Sources: Official Nintendo corporate histories nintendo.co.jp nintendo.co.jp, financial reports

nintendoworldreport.com nintendo.co.jp, and established gaming press theguardian.com thenationalnews.com allabout-japan.com.

The citations above (e.g. ‘ nintendo.co.jp ’) refer to specific lines in those sources.

Citas



Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>



Nintendo History | Hardware | Nintendo UK https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/Hardware/Nintendo-History/Nintendo-History-625945.html?srltid=AfmBOop9T0o7iy5UUq_aevqThOhzCsdonglq0zFbJ6u_h2Vazb_BGdzj



Nintendo History | Hardware | Nintendo UK https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/Hardware/Nintendo-History/Nintendo-History-625945.html?srltid=AfmBOop9T0o7iy5UUq_aevqThOhzCsdonglq0zFbJ6u_h2Vazb_BGdzj



Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>



Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>



Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>



Nintendo History | Hardware | Nintendo UK https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/Hardware/Nintendo-History/Nintendo-History-625945.html?srltid=AfmBOop9T0o7iy5UUq_aevqThOhzCsdonglq0zFbJ6u_h2Vazb_BGdzj



Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>

W Nintendo video game consoles - Wikipedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nintendo_video_game_consoles



Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>



Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>



Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>



Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>

 Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>

 The Nintendo Revolution in the Good Old Days | All About Japan

<https://allabout-japan.com/en/article/2142/>

 Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>

 IR Information : Sales Data - Dedicated Video Game Sales Units

https://www.nintendo.co.jp/ir/en/finance/hard_soft/index.html

 Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>

 Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>

 Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>

 IR Information : Sales Data - Dedicated Video Game Sales Units

https://www.nintendo.co.jp/ir/en/finance/hard_soft/index.html

 Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>

 Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>

W **Super Nintendo World - Wikipedia**

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Super_Nintendo_World

 Corporate Information : Company History

<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>

W **List of best-selling video game franchises - Wikipedia**

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_best-selling_video_game_franchises W **List of best-selling video game franchises - Wikipedia** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_best-selling_video_game_franchises

W **List of best-selling video game franchises - Wikipedia**

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_best-selling_video_game_franchises

W **List of best-selling video game franchises - Wikipedia**

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_best-selling_video_game_franchises

W **List of best-selling video game franchises - Wikipedia**

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_best-selling_video_game_franchises



IR Information : Sales Data - Dedicated Video Game Sales Units

https://www.nintendo.co.jp/ir/en/finance/hard_soft/index.html



IR Information : Sales Data - Dedicated Video Game Sales Units

https://www.nintendo.co.jp/ir/en/finance/hard_soft/index.html



IR Information : Sales Data - Dedicated Video Game Sales Units

https://www.nintendo.co.jp/ir/en/finance/hard_soft/index.html



IR Information : Sales Data - Dedicated Video Game Sales Units

https://www.nintendo.co.jp/ir/en/finance/hard_soft/index.html



The Nintendo Revolution in the Good Old Days | All About Japan

<https://allabout-japan.com/en/article/2142/>



IR Information : Sales Data - Dedicated Video Game Sales Units

https://www.nintendo.co.jp/ir/en/finance/hard_soft/index.html



IR Information : Sales Data - Dedicated Video Game Sales Units

https://www.nintendo.co.jp/ir/en/finance/hard_soft/index.html



IR Information : Sales Data - Dedicated Video Game Sales Units

https://www.nintendo.co.jp/ir/en/finance/hard_soft/index.html



IR Information : Sales Data - Dedicated Video Game Sales Units

https://www.nintendo.co.jp/ir/en/finance/hard_soft/index.html



IR Information : Sales Data - Dedicated Video Game Sales Units

https://www.nintendo.co.jp/ir/en/finance/hard_soft/index.html

 **Nintendo's revolution: How the Wii changed gaming forever, 20 years on | The**

Nati... <https://www.thenationalnews.com/arts-culture/2024/05/08/nintendo-wii-announcement-2004/>

 **Nintendo's design guru Shigeru Miyamoto: 'I wanted to make something weird' |**
C...

<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2023/dec/30/nintendo-shigeru-miyamoto-interview-mario-zeldaswitch-pikmin-splatoon>

 **Nintendo's design guru Shigeru Miyamoto: 'I wanted to make something weird' |**

C... <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2023/dec/30/nintendo-shigeru-miyamoto-interview-mario-zeldaswitch-pikmin-splatoon>

 **Nintendo's design guru Shigeru Miyamoto: 'I wanted to make something weird' |**
C... <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2023/dec/30/nintendo-shigeru-miyamoto-interview-mario-zeldaswitch-pikmin-splatoon>

 **Nintendo Announces Final Financial Results For 2023-24 Fiscal Year And 2024-25**
Pr... <http://www.nintendoworldreport.com/news/67109/nintendo-announces-final-financial-results-for-2023-24-fiscal-year-and-2024-25-projections>

 **Nintendo Announces Final Financial Results For 2023-24 Fiscal Year And 2024-25**
Pr... <http://www.nintendoworldreport.com/news/67109/nintendo-announces-final-financial-results-for-2023-24-fiscal-year-and-2024-25-projections>

 **Nintendo Announces Final Financial Results For 2023-24 Fiscal Year And 2024-25**
Pr... <http://www.nintendoworldreport.com/news/67109/nintendo-announces-final-financial-results-for-202324-fiscal-year-and-2024-25-projections>

 **Nintendo History | Hardware | Nintendo UK** https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/Hardware/Nintendo-History/Nintendo-History-625945.html?srsId=AfmBOop9T0o7iy5UUq_aevqThOhzCsdongIq0zFbJ6u_h2Vazb_BGdzj

 **Nintendo Switch 2 to be released in 2025 - News - Nintendo Official Site**
<https://www.nintendo.com/us/whatsnew/nintendo-switch-2-to-be-released-in-2025/?srsId=AfmBOooapYNJfS0IFmO9r5pSAuMGJ1CC83vIZF5otoQuOUFF0p2gCTRl>

 **Nintendo Switch 2 to be released in 2025 - News - Nintendo Official Site**
<https://www.nintendo.com/us/whatsnew/nintendo-switch-2-to-be-released-in-2025/?srsId=AfmBOooapYNJfS0IFmO9r5pSAuMGJ1CC83vIZF5otoQuOUFF0p2gCTRl>

 **Super Nintendo World - Wikipedia**
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Super_Nintendo_World

 **Nintendo Announces Final Financial Results For 2023-24 Fiscal Year And 2024-25**
Pr... <http://www.nintendoworldreport.com/news/67109/nintendo-announces-final-financial-results-for-202324-fiscal-year-and-2024-25-projections>

 **Corporate Information : Company History**
<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/corporate/en/history/index.html>

Todas las fuentes

 nintendo.co  nintendo  en.wikipedia  allabout-japan  thenationalnews
 theguardian  nintendoworldreport